

sequentially transporting a first upstream frame and a second upstream frame from said plurality of user stations to said network head-end, said first frame including said first set of at least one contention time slot, said second frame including said second set of at least one contention time slot, wherein, in response to said first upstream frame, said network head-end generates said downstream frame as an indication of any contention involving a simultaneous access of any contention time slots of said first set of at least one contention time slot by at least two user stations of said plurality of user stations; and wherein, in response to said downstream frame indicating a contention involving a simultaneous access of a first contention time slot of said first set of at least one contention time slot by at least two user stations of said plurality of user stations, said at least two user stations involved in said first contention exclusively access said second set of at least one contention time slot.

Kou, as read by the applicants, relates to a random access communication system comprising a central station and user stations, each user station transmits a packet to the central station on a randomly selected timeslot of a time-division multiple access channel and defines a plurality of "minislots" within the selected timeslot and transmits a burst on one of the minislots.

Applicants can find nothing in Kou that teaches in response to said first upstream frame, said network head-end generates said downstream frame as an indication of any contention involving a simultaneous access of any contention time slots of said first set of at least one contention time slot by at least two user stations of said plurality of user stations; and wherein, in response to

said downstream frame indicating a contention involving a simultaneous access of a first contention time slot of said first set of at least one contention time slot by at least two user stations of said plurality of user stations, said at least two user stations involved in said first contention exclusively access said second set of at least one contention timeslot, as recited in independent claim 14. Independent claims 17-21 recite similar limitations.

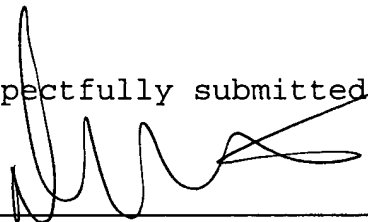
Kou teaches that when a collision occurs between packets simultaneously transmitted from two terminal stations, the central station proceeds to assign two timeslots and notifies the identifications of the assigned timeslots to the sending station to allow retransmission of the corrupted packets, see col. 2, lines 56-61. Therefore, as with the prior art discussed in the specification on page 1, lines 15-25, if the user stations involved in the contention, simultaneously attempt to access the two assigned timeslots, further contention may occur. Hence, Kou teaches nothing to resolve this further contention of the assigned timeslots.

In contrast, the Applicant teaches an efficient contention-solving method in which after a contention occurs in a network and further contention occurs with regard to first set of contention time slots, an additional (second) set of contention time slots are provided.

It is well settled that a reference that does not teach, show or suggest all of the features of a claimed invention cannot anticipate that invention. Since Kou does not teach, show or suggest all of the features of independent claims 14, and 17-21, as recited above, applicant respectfully submits that claims 14-21, as amended, are patentable over Kou.

The applicants have made a sincere attempt to advance the prosecution of this application by reducing the issues for consideration and specifically delineating the zone of patentability. The applicants submit that the claims fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 102. In view of the foregoing remarks, entry of this amendment, favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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On February 4, 2002

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